

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, 1880, with transcript

Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel (Hubbard) Bell. L Langham Hotel, Tuesday, (prob. in Sept., 1880) My darling wee wifie!

I feel quite jealous of your Papa — he receives such nice letters every day and I have to get all the news from his letters. However of course I know dear how busy you are with little Elsie and Winnie and with shopping and how tired you are when you get home and so I hold myself in patience and it won't be long before we are all together again.

We have about concluded the arrangements for the Oriental in regard to India for the present and the Yorkshire Company is fast crystallizing into shape.

I am so glad that I was sent for — for I feel that this week has done much to bring your father and me nearer together. You know darling that whatever differences there are between us they are merely differences of opinion — and I love him very much — and I am sure he does me and we need never have had any differences at all had I only adopted the policy of being as open and frank with him on business matters as previously I have been reticent. I know a great deal more of business matters now than I did a few years ago — and I find that my determination to do nothing and agree to nothing I don't understand — is bearing its due fruits. At this stage my conduct must sometimes appear most aggravating to your father but he is all patience and kindness — and tried to help me to understand and the result is I do understand and then all is plain sailing.

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I feel — I say — that the last few days has brought us together a great deal. I should rather say that — it has brought your father nearer to me — for I am afraid that my rather obstructive position must have exerted rather a wrong impression on his mind. I am slow in

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taking in conclusions that he jumps at — but I find myself understanding his position more and more fully — and I am sure that frank discussion in the past would have avoided the present unpleasant state of affairs. I do not see how we are going to settle matters at all. Apart from the Trust — matter stand thus. Your father has — without authority given to the International Co. the interests that I have given to the Oriental Co. That is snarl No. 1. Those interests were given to the Oriental in consequence of a cablegram from your father to the effect (as I understand) that these countries were not occupied by the International and would be given up if desired. (snarl 2).

The only suggestion Mr. Hubbard has yet made is that the International Co. continue to occupy the field they have taken and that the Oriental Co. lets the matter pass and let the matter pass — that your father should pay to my family a cash consideration as damages for the injury done us — leaving the other parties to the Oriental out in the cold. I think upon consideration he will see how thoroughly impracticable this is — and I cannot consent that the interests I have given to the Oriental are not to be worked up so as to be of value. I do not see how the question can be settled by either Mr. Hubbard or myself. I see no way but to let it go to the two companies.

There I won't write any more upon such horrid matters but I do hope Mr. Hubbard will do nothing further for the International 3 in regard to France until all the other difficulties are settled. Now darling good bye and don't worry about it. I feel sure your father will not be so unjust as to put my letter to him on one side without consideration — as simply an “unkind communication which should not be sent” — and I am sure from his conduct here that he will have patience with me — and discuss matters in a proper spirit — when he realizes that I am determined to understand the condition of affairs and (even though it may ultimately prove that I am in the wrong) — that I am determined actively to oppose whatever I believe to be unjust and wrong — whatever the consequences may be. I trust however that there may be no necessity for my doing what would stab myself to the heart and hurt you my little wife.

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Your loving, Alec.